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Response to “Resident-as-teacher to provide multidisciplinary online medical education on Instagram”

Réponse au « Les résidents enseignent : capsules d’enseignement médical multidisciplinaire sur Instagram »

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We applaud Liu and Sharma in addressing the need for continued clinical teaching during the COVID-19 pandemic through Instagram.¹ We believe additional features could optimize the use of this social media platform as an educational tool.

Whilst the Medskl.com account proved successful,¹ it is important to acknowledge the risk of Instagram providing a passive learning experience with information embedded in a single image. This limitation can be overcome by utilizing Instagram’s swipe function to create flashcards, where posts consist of questions and answers with corresponding explanations separated into two images. Students can, therefore, engage with the posed question before revealing the answer. This participation is consistent with efficient learning where active recall produces effective gains in memory.² Likewise, residents can use the story function to create quizzes that offer instant feedback and polls to gauge interest and tailor content to areas of struggle.

According to the cognitive theory of multimedia learning, students can process only a few elements of a learning tool at once.³ In order to take advantage of this, mnemonics could be incorporated in posts. Bakhos and Abou Khaled found that amongst 180 medical students, 44% found mnemonics to be the most practical learning strategy offered on Instagram.⁴ Mnemonics can improve information recall by creatively synthesizing salient

features, an example of this includes WWW (Wet, Wobbly, Wacky) to recognize the features of normal pressure hydrocephalus.

Conclusively, Instagram is a useful platform in medical education and its features can be optimized so as to foster students’ learning experiences.

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